

IX. Promotional & Collateral Development

When targeting the general public with traffic safety messages promoting your program, consider using promotional or collateral materials to supplement any current or planned media relations activities. These include, but are not necessarily limited to, the items listed below.

Brochure — Agency, Issue or Program Descriptive

Brochures are valuable in providing information about your organization, program or issue. They can also be used as direct mail pieces or distributed at events to promote your program. Consider the way in which the brochure will be used before beginning design and production. Will it primarily be distributed as a self-mailer, included as a stand-alone piece in an information packet or handed out at community events? Your printing budget will also be a significant factor in determining the size and number of pages included in the brochure. One of the most popular sizes is a two- or three-fold brochure created from an 8 1/2" by 11" piece of paper. This size fits nicely in a #10 business size envelope allowing it to be easily mailed.

Other important decisions include: the quantity needed, type of paper, size and design of typeface, number of colors of ink for printing, illustration or clip art needed, photographs, if any — all of which can dramatically effect the cost of the brochure. While clip art is a relatively inexpensive way to illustrate, it is important to avoid clichés. Choosing photographs may add the cost of a photographer and require obtaining consent forms from photo subjects. Some photographic images can be purchased via the Web through photo libraries, but they too can be expensive, costing between \$100 - \$1,000 per photo. There are also software programs that include templates (sample designs) that allow you to prepare a simple brochure. When budget allows, working with a professional copywriter and graphic designer is most effective.

Posters and Fliers

Posters and fliers can be simple or elaborate, depending on the budget. Both are a good way to communicate basic information (promote hotline, Web site, etc.) and help heighten awareness about an issue or promote a change in behavior (ex. "Safety Belts Save Lives" or "Buckle Up Everyone — Children in the Back"). Both posters and fliers can be mailed to organizations for posting or distribution, or sent into the community for posting by staff or volunteers. Many businesses, churches, schools and social service agencies have bulletin boards and are willing to post materials from agencies that serve the community.

Promotional Items/Giveaways

Promotional items (imprinted pencils/pens, magnets, key chains, water bottles, etc.) are particularly useful at community events where you want to connect and impact consumers receiving a lot of information at one time. It's important to make sure the item you are giving away is appropriate for the audience you're trying to reach. For example, mouse pads promoting alcohol and other drug abuse prevention would make great promotional items for college students. Parents would likely appreciate sippie-cups or bibs that feature Child Passenger Safety messages. While some promotional items are inexpensive, quantity and quality can quickly increase the cost of giveaways. There are numerous vendors that specialize in promotional items. Most can be found in the yellow pages under specialty companies.

Promotional items funded by the Office of Traffic Safety must feature a traffic safety message, which directly relates to the project objective.

Additional promotional items/giveaways include:

T-shirts — at an outdoor event, T-shirts can serve a twofold purpose as a thank you to staff and as a method for distinguishing your organization. Business specialty vendors that produce giveaway items generally also handle T-shirts. These companies often have designers on staff to work with you, but if budget allows, hiring a graphic designer and copywriter is most effective. Be sure all T-shirts include a traffic safety message.

Direct Mail Letters or Postcards — Direct mail letters and postcards are one of the most cost-effective ways of reaching a broad audience, as well specific groups of people. These pieces can be sent with other materials, such as a fact sheet or informational brochure. They can also be designed for one-time use or be used continuously to target consumers long-term. At a minimum, the cost would include stationery/paper and postage.

Bill Stuffers — Utility companies or department stores will occasionally include a flier or announcement from community based organizations with their regular billing. For example, your local cable or telephone company might promote "Child Passenger Safety Week" by including tips for proper safety seat use in their February billing.

Bill stuffers are particularly useful in promoting a major special event to a large segment of the community or making a broad, general statement, i.e. "December is Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month."

Grocery Bag Ads — Many grocery store chains promote local community activities and events on their shopping bags. When deciding to use this tool for one of your campaigns or activities, keep in mind that retail outlets plan well in advance for their in-store promotions. Contact the retailer at least three months in advance to ensure they reserve space for your event or issue.

Banners — Banners can be a simple way to draw attention to your facility, highlight an observance or campaign such as “Designate Before You Celebrate,” or simply accent your booth or trade show display at a special event. When working with a sign or banner vendor, keep in mind that you may want to make your banner “evergreen” — by leaving off a date or year — so that the banner can be used numerous times and is cost-effective. If a date is required, talk to your vendor to find out how it can be modified or reconstructed for use in following years.

Trade Show Displays — If your organization regularly participates in community events, consider developing a portable trade show display to help promote your program or campaign. Trade show displays tend to be expensive and often come with unexpected costs during the life of the display to keep it current. Plan ahead for maintenance and revisions to keep your display as up-to-date as possible. When creating trade show displays, seek out other organizations that have produced similar items and ask for suggestions and recommendations. Consider display size, shipping weight, ease of assembly and electrical requirements when developing your display.

Table Tents and Tray Liners — Table tents and tray liners, used largely at fast food chains, are a good way to communicate your message to parents and children. When developing a partnership with a fast food chain or franchise, consider the strategy as part of your campaign. Plan tray liners or table tents to coincide with other communication tactics. For example, develop a tray liner or table tent to promote bicycle safety and helmet use during National Bike Month in May. If possible, enlist the services of a graphic designer to help develop the look of your tray liner or table tent.

Point-of-Purchase — Point-of-purchase (POP) materials, displayed on counter-tops in high-traffic areas at retail establishments, are an excellent way to have a quick impact on a broad cross section of the community. Since your POP displays will be competing with other display items, it’s important that the piece stands out to grab the attention of customers. While these materials are powerful ways of communicating information, they may be cost-prohibitive if not underwritten. Generally, large quantities of these materials are needed to make a worthwhile impact. Utilize partnerships with a variety of venues such as libraries, laundromats, grocery stores, retail stores, restaurants and family-fun centers to help with distribution.